

DIRECT ACTION

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MONTHLY PAPER OF THE DAM/IWA...THE VOICE OF ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM.

Miners and the law MacGregor— Who the hell is he anyway?

"The law should be used as just another weapon in the government's arsenal" —

General Frank Kitson

The miners' strike has brought about enormous repression, with all the stops being pulled out (bar shooting strikers) by the Government/bosses. The police violence has been appalling (it being a matter of chance that only 2 miners have died - so far), but the courts are playing an equally important role.

General Frank Kitson, the former COC. of the British Army in the North of Ireland, wrote, in his book "Low - Intensity Operations" "the law should be used as just another weapon in the governments arsenal. The law should be used for the disposal of unwanted members of the public."

The State did not of course need to be told this. Over the last 5 years the Tories have brought in various laws aimed at events just like the miners' strike and have used the courts in new ways.

SHIREBROOK

The tactic of sequestering union funds is a good example of this. At the same time they've been going through the law books to find anything to attack miners and their supporters with: old begging laws have been used against street collectors, and at Shirebrook in Derbyshire they came up with a law that the NUM solicitors had never heard of.

Len Tipple of the Shirebrook Strike Committee told us that they've begun to use a law from the 1780's which deals with "besetting" people at their work, residence or place of recreation (pub or club). Picketing can be interpreted as "besetting" people at work,

and calling someone 'scab' in the pub could also be an offence.

This is being used in Shirebrook because of the close split amongst the miners: only about 60% are on strike, and such a split makes for a lot of bad feelings. Strikers sitting in the club on Saturday night with only $\frac{1}{2}$ pint all evening get pretty angry, when they see scabs living it up on the bonus money they get, and can't be expected not to tell the scabs what they think of them (at the very least), but they can now be fined £100-200 for doing so. So far at least 30 strikers have been done for this in Shirebrook, with some of them getting up to 3 months in prison when this wasn't



the only charge against them. A similar law has been used in Ayrshire. 87 strikers were arrested for picketing the home of a scab and may be prosecuted under an 1875 Act of Parliament which makes it an offence to "beset a house".



High Noon in Armthorpe, August 22nd

It was former NUM sponsored MP Eric Varley who brought Ian Macgregor to the Boardrooms of Britain's nationalised industry. As secretary of state for industry in 1975 Varley appointed the then 63 year old Scots-born MacGregor as non-executive director of BL. Two years later he promoted him to become deputy chairman - to Edwardes - a post that was only relinquished when MacGregor became chief executive at British Steel in July 1980.

MacGregor's record on jobs has been devastating. The 34,000 jobs that went at BL when he was director were followed by 85,000 more at BSC between 1980 and 1983. The 20,000 job losses he wants at the Coal Board this year will be followed by tens of thousands more, if he gets his way, in the remaining years of his contract with the NCB. A 12 year MacGregor stewardship of British nationalised industries would have cost 200,000 jobs.

Ian Kinloch MacGregor was born in Scotland in September 1912. After leaving Glasgow University he became a management trainee with British Aluminium. In 1940 he joined a ministry of supply mission to North America to buy arms. He stayed in the States most of the next 40 years. He was seconded to the US Army Ordnance Corps in 1945 and after the war worked in a number of metal manufacturing companies, emerging as vice-president of Climax Molybdenum in 1959.

AMAX

This company soon merged with the American Metal Company to form AMAX - the firm at the centre of his career. His great 'achievement' at AMAX was, in the 1960's, to corner the market in the production of molybdenum - a mineral required

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for the production of certain high grade steels and copper. At one time the corporation achieved a 50% share of the world wide market in the supply of the metal. The vast monopoly profits gained from this led to Amax diversifying into other minerals, including coal. The diversification was not a great success.

Amax's profits in the MacGregor presidential era rose modestly from \$60m in 1967 to \$69million in 1977. They collapsed in the post MacGregor period and by 1982 the firm was showing a loss of \$392m. According to the Financial Times (29.3.83): "After years of hectic expansion Amax is in full scale retreat...inevitably this reflects on the MacGregor stewardship". He has been blamed, among other things, for the shortcomings of his successors whom he chose.

While still chairman of Amax in 1981 the firm was courted with a 4 billion dollar takeover by Standard Oil of California, the takeover fell through after opposition from the Amax board. The paper value of the company tumbled to a 1/3 of the bid price. According to the New Statesman (18.3.83): Amax rejection has been termed the most costly mistake in US corporate history - and MacGregor himself has said that he was remiss in not pushing through a merger with Standard oil while he was still in charge at Amax.

BRITISH LEYLAND

When Varley brought MacGregor to BL in 1975 the company employed 191,467 workers and made a loss of £76m in the year. By the fifth year of MacGregor's directorship employment had fallen to 157,460 and the

company declared its largest ever loss, £384m. The six financial years over which his directorship spanned resulted in a sixth of BL's jobs disappearing and a total accumulated loss of £517m.

British Steel

MacGregor had to leave "full time" work at Amax on reaching the age of 65 in 1977. He joined Lazard Freres, a New York investment bank as a partner soon after, but began looking for other opportunities. In 1980 he was offered, and took, the job of turning round the British Steel Corporation. The terms offered as his "transfer" fee to Lazard Freres provoked controversy and are considered later. The MacGregor plan for BSC was to break even at the end of his three years. By any consideration the man's record was one of abject failure. He more than halved the workforce, from 160,000 to 81,000 but did not significantly affect the losses of the corporation - they were running at £375m a year when he arrived and had improved slightly to £318m when he left. The 3 years of his chairmanship resulted in accumulated losses of 1,100m.

British Steel's share of the UK market had dropped to 43% when he departed - 1% lower than it was after the 13 week strike in 1980, which preceded his reign at the corporation. Not only did he damage the markets of BSC when he was there, he undermined those in his future corporation, the NCB. BSC is the second largest consumer of British Coal; in 1980 it reduced its orders by 25%. Meanwhile MacGregor increased BSC's consumption of imported coal from 14% to 24% of the total.

National Coal Board

MacGregor's job savagery at BSC and his contempt for

the unions - no national pay negotiations were concluded in his three years at steel, were the chief qualities that the Government saw when sending him to the NCB last September. When his NCB appointment was announced in March 1983 the Government made much of his American experience in coal. Under his direction Amax moved from having no interest in coal to being America's third largest producer. But the nature of the mining was completely different to the NCB's. 9 of Amax's 10 mines are open cast. Because extraction is simpler, open cast mines are much more capital intensive and employ fewer workers than deep seam pits that are more typical of the NCB's operation.

He has tried to replicate the capital intensive (low employment) condition of his US experience in the British industries he has overseen. At BSC he was fond of describing the extent of automation in some Japanese steel plants as being so automated: "that you could fire a bullet through it without the risk of hurting anyone" (New Statesman 18.3.83). MacGregor's weapons are not quite so painless in the the British Coal Industry.

Rewards

The salaries MacGregor has received for decimating the nationalised industries amount to little more than pocket money to him. As a non executive director of BL he would have been paid 10,000 and £15,000 a year, and at BSC he received £51,960 a year (twice turning down pay increases). He is paid £59,325 a year at the coal board.

Because he is still a partner in Lazard Freres, the Government entered into "transfer" fees for his services. For his work at

BSC it paid the bank a down payment of £675,000 and will be paying up to £700,000 depending on BSC's results at 31st of March this year and up to a further £450,000 depending on the results next year. The exact sum of the compensation is to be determined by a review committee. Lazards took fewer risks when agreeing the compensation payments for MacGregor's term at the NCB - they are to receive £500,000 per year - regardless of performance. As a partner in Lazards MacGregor will receive an undisclosed proportion of this sum.

In addition, MacGregor is still receiving income from Amac under a number of consultancy agreements. In 1981, he received £100,000 from the firm.

Under the terms of the agreements he was paid at the rate of £71,000 per year for services which "shall occupy at least one quarter, but not in excess of one third of business time". Under another agreement which runs until October 1987 he receives £17,800 per year for services which shall not "unduly interfere" with any other employment he may have taken. Until September 1982, and while still at BSC, he received £2,600 a month from Alumax, a 50% owned affiliate of Amax. As an outside director of Amax he also received £11,400 a year plus £570 for every meeting attended.

With money from Lazard and Amax to add to his NCB salary MacGregor will have few worries about financial security for the future, which is more than can be said for the 40 workers from nationalised industries he has directed who have joined the dole queue every day under his supervision.

SOURCE: UNION NEWSLETTER.

THE MINERS' NEXT STEP -

INTERNATIONAL MINERS' UNION

The most important lesson to come out of the present Miners dispute is the importance of the roles played by the Workers of other countries, especially fellow miners, in their tremendous show of solidarity in sustaining the families of striking miners with gifts of money, food, clothing, holidays for their children etc.

Without such practical solidarity the suffering of Mining communities would have been far greater, there would have been starvation which would have no doubt weakened the Miners resolve to fight. However, bellies of children have been filled, they have been clothed, and regardless of the ruthless brutality of the State, the cutting of DHSS benefits to the bone, they have fought on.

This International support

has impressed the Miners, many of them moved to tears in gratitude of what their fellow workers have done.

They know, as no one other than a Miner can, the dangers and hardships, the toll in health and lives which their industry extols, they can appreciate the impact that the closing of pits can have on communities, whose only industry in the area is the pit.

Also many of them know from their own experience what its like to be on the receiving end of the police batons, therefore there is a common bond amongst miners which crosses frontiers, which transcends division made by language or colour of skin.

Many Miners now feel that once this strike has been won, this International Solidarity must persist in a permanent organisational form - An International Union of Miners which crosses frontiers, making an injury to one the concern of all.

In America, both North and South, miners are engag-

ed in struggles, in the repressive regime of South Africa miners are engaged in struggle, behind the iron curtain of the uncommunist 'communist' countries and in the unfree 'free world' miners are struggling.

The Mining Industry is the bed rock Industry of all economies, and internationally would constitute a tremendous force to combat the exploitation of workers by the bosses, and to combat the warmongering of governments, showing a lead to people throughout the world and in every industry what power workers hold in their hands when they stand together.

On the picket lines the cry has been "the workers united can never be defeated", Internationally applied "the workers united are totally irresistible."

At the beginning of this century, Tom Mann and other Syndicalists active in the Miners Federation urged the bringing into being of One Union for the Mining Industry, now the time has come for Syndicalists to

call for the Miners' next step, an International Union of all Miners throughout the world, it is not a new idea, it was put forward by the Industrial Workers of the World, but prematurely, now experience involved in the present strike has again given rise to the idea in the minds of many miners, it has recently been discussed by the French miners who brought food supplies to South Wales.

It was Syndicalists which gave voice to the demand which finally brought the NUM into existence, now the time has come for Syndicalists to voice to the growing surge for an International Union of Miners.

Today, Capitalism crosses all frontiers to further its greed, International Cartels, Banking, the EEC etc., this can only be combatted by workers organised Internationally, and here the Miners are now beginning to show the way.

From an idea put forward by Harry Mole of Abernant Colliery.

MUTUAL AID NCB

MUTUAL AID OR CHARITY

People who collect food and money for the mining communities have been derided by sections of the anarchist movement and by some Trotskyist parties, because it is claimed that collecting for the miners is merely charity which should be left to the liberals and the Salvation Army (in fact, neither are supporting strikers!).

Food and money that is collected for the welfare of the mining communities is distributed throughout the mining regions by the union organisation and locally by the soup kitchens and women support group networks. Unlike conventional charity where assistance is given by specialists and the benevolent to those less fortunate, and where the receivers have no control over the type or nature of the charity, assistance given to the mining communities is directly in their hands.

By encouraging and giving support to people who are involved in mutual aid is to help develop one of the most important aspects of anarchist ideas. Those anarchists who condemn the encouraging and support of mutual aid, because it is not revolutionary enough, are often the same people who support and glorify all forms of so-called 'revolutionary' action, carried out by the small group. Those people who deride the support of mutual aid, which is the very foundation of the society which we wish to see, and at the same time hold up the small group of revolutionary purists engaging in armed struggle in isolation as the only true form of revolutionary activity, are not only attacking the foundation of anarchist beliefs but are engaging in the glorification of armed struggle, which is the glorification of war, which is the basis of militarism, which is the foundation of the State.

SHOPS

SHOPS GO UNDER

Castleford and Pontefract shops have begun closing due to plummeting trade as a result of the NCB/NUM dispute. Staff have been cut back elsewhere. Wisely they blame the NCB/ Govt./media/police manipulation.

cuffs

ALLERTON BYWATER COLLIERY

Police have been using plastic handcuffs, which are dangerous, stopping blood circulation/causing swelling and can only be freed with strong scissors. Two young miners arrested and placed in the cuffs also had to endure 14 hours without food and drink or blankets on shit and piss-stained mattresses.

WALKDEN NCB REPAIR YARD

At Walkden National Coal Board repair yard near Bolton, about 30 workers (out of over 200) are on strike, 25 of whom are active as pickets, with support from ten miners who live locally.

For the most part the strike line is small, but there have been mass pickets such as last week when the coaches ferrying in the scabs were stoned and a wall was knocked over when the cops shoved pickets across the road. Malcolm, an active striker, told us the manager has pleaded with them to go back to work and claimed to understand their principals! However, the picket has persuaded non-NCB lorry drivers to turn back, but NCB lorries driven by NUM members always cross.

The usual police presence is 2 cops who keep an eye on the 2-4 pickets. It also seems that the cops have been ordered not to talk with the strikers.

Talk continues that the yard may be closing in the near future, and over the last 2-3 years more than 100 redundancies have occurred. These days the only work coming into the yard comes from Notts.

NUPE

DONCASTER

3 council workers, NUPE members, were on their way to work at the Hatfield Depot as cops stopped them. Windows were banged, their car shaken and threats were made. Enraged, the workers joined pickets at the Markham Main colliery in Armthorpe. Similar events, harassment of local workers (not just miners), are becoming commonplace.

VOM

"Voice of the Majority", "Voice of the Moderates", or "Voice of the Morons"? is the title of one of the 'return to work' groups which have appeared to NCB applause. Promising a "massive return to work" (as yet a non-event!) they join the Tory darling 'Silver Birch' etc who keep working (with bonuses) and appeal for money to take up court cases against the NUM. In London ads have appeared in local press and leaflets are reported to have been distributed in select areas, under the name, "Return to Work Campaign".



MASS picket by wives and supporters at Cammell Laird following the imprisonment of the occupiers. They spent one month in prison.

CLAIMANTS

BURNLEY CLAIMANTS UNION

The newly formed Burnley Claimants Union held a picket at the DHSS offices on the 29th June with about 30 people protesting outside, including some striking miners. The demands of the pickets included an end to the non-accountability of the DHSS, scrapping the means test, immediate response to claims, end of harassment of claimants and an end to the repressive cohabitation rule.

The picket was a success with outstanding claims being met due to solidarity. A lot of good work has been done in distributing information to striking miners on benefits they are entitled to receive but often don't due to Government instructions to the DHSS to be obstructive.

The union is not a political group but is open to all unwaged workers as well as the employed. Two local DAM members are active in the Union.

Scabs

COP FANTASY

West Yorkshire's Chief Constable, Mr Colin Sampson has appealed for an end to mass pickets, and wants the number of pickets to equal the number of scabs trying to get into work! Maybe he thinks few people want to scab, hence few pickets? Probably wants to get more scabs through really!



UNIONS

UNFAITHFUL FRATERNAL SWEET-HEARTS.

MEMBERSHIP GRABBING is causing bitterness between some unions. It is a row which was well hushed up at the recent TUC conference. The Electricians' union (EETPU), which has pioneered no-strike deals and single union agreements at Metal Box and at Hitachi in South Wales, has been condemned for selling union rights.

This summer the EETPU paper CONTACT hit back at the Transport & General Union, which it claimed had poached a dozen of its members - part time women cleaners - at Ince B Power Station. CONTACT called the T & G's act "unsavoury poaching... by the Transport & General Workers' Union in a sweetheart deal with a private contracting firm which severely undercuts pay rates and reduces jobs."

Earlier the EETPU had threatened to pull out of the TUC; if the TUC tried to outlaw its own emphasis on single union deals and no-strike clauses. It points out that the Civil Service unions put up a 'no disruption' option to the Prime Minister over the GCHQ, and the newspaper unions did the same to try to stop the Maxwell takeover at the Mirror.

No-Strike Sham.

The Unprincipled double dealing hypocrisy of these sweetheart fix ups is shown up in the editorial in CONTACT last month; "We cannot, and would not, ban strikes." Of course no union can stop strikes.

No strike deals are a fraud born of what CONTACT calls "...the scramble for union membership..."

The Electricians' Union knows it can't stop strikes, yet it sets up sham deals committing itself to binding arbitration.

Why?

Because it wants members and will sell its arse, if need be, to get them. Also, if its members do strike it will declare it unofficial and will refuse to pay strike pay.

This, at a time when union benefits have already been cut to the bone, is important, because it saves the union money. However, despite the shortage of funds the EETPU officials still managed to vote themselves a big rise in their own pensions this year.

We Direct Actionists don't just oppose such sham deals because of the unions lack of good faith in making them, or because they will cut off strike pay to members, but also because they imply a restraint on our freedom at work.

The Direct Action Movement seeks to oppose and expose all sweetheart deals between the bosses and the unions.

Sparks (EETPU).

class war

WE ANARCHISTS have a reputation for violence and acts of individual terrorism which stems in part from the 'Bomb Era' of the turn of the century. Also, present day politicians habitually use the word 'anarchy' in the sense of chaos, when in fact it comes from the Greek for 'contrary to government', and anarchists are people who believe in and fight for a free and classless society.

We oppose that apparatus of class rule and terrorism, the State. The State which has for over eight months terrorized mining communities and strikers. The State which is prepared to contemplate the annihilation of millions in a nuclear holocaust. Beside the crimes of the State all others pale into insignificance. Because we oppose this every day terrorism, the State and class rule, anarchists have opposed every fratricidal war fought over the years in the interests of the masters with workers as cannon fodder. Our battle cry is "peace amongst the workers of the World, war to the oppressors."

We reject acts of individual assassination against the ruling class as the way of fundamentally changing society. The IRA's bomb in Brighton might have wiped out the entire British Government. We shed no tears for the people directly responsible for the poverty, misery, yes even terror, heaped on the working class every day. But after the dust has settled the system remains. One or two faces might have gone, but there's plenty more to take their place.

The only body which in the final analysis has the power to challenge the basis of this unjust world system is an organised and militant working class. What is lacking today is the class consciousness and will to use that power, but once on the move there's nothing in the world can really defeat it. We have seen signs of that power in the great fight the miners have put up this year.

The responsibility for every death arising from the 'troubles' in Ireland lies squarely with the British ruling class. As long as they refuse to see that there can be no British Government solution to the problems they created when they colonized Ireland the killings will continue, they will have to maintain a

military garrison in their last toe hold in Ireland, and the conflict will inevitably spill over onto the streets of Britain itself. And as long as the British Working Class acquiesces in this state of affairs it can expect the methods learnt in Ulster to be employed back home, as we've seen in the present miners' strike.

The Government is wringing every drop of propaganda value and voter sympathy it can from the Brighton bombing. McGregor has even compared it to the miners defending themselves on the picketlines. You could say the bombing was just what the Government needed. For a while at least the Miners' Strike, mass unemployment and the economy were relegated to a back seat and all the media attention was devoted to the hypocritical denunciations of violence by these legal terrorists.

Perhaps the real attitude of the State to political terrorism is best illustrated by the now widely recognized 'Strategy of Tension' operated in Italy in the 60's and 70's. This involved a concerted terror campaign carried out by fascist bombers with the backing of elements in the Italian State, which claimed many lives and was blamed on the Left. The aim was to destabilize society and create an atmosphere receptive to the Right's calls for "law and order" and strong Government. In one of these Rightist outrages, Bologna railway station in 1980, 86 people were killed. Earlier, in 1969 in Milan, 16 people were killed in the Piazza Fontana bombing and the police tried to stitch up the anarchists; an anarchist railway worker, union activist and member of the anti-Nazi Resistance was killed when he "jumped" from the fourth floor of Milan police headquarters while being interrogated by the very scum behind the bombings. There is even evidence that the Red Brigades were unwittingly used by people high up in the corridors of power as an excuse to attack the Left as a whole. A whole list of police and army officers, businessmen, freemasons, judges, and Government officials have now been implicated.

Even though the British Ruling Class didn't plant the Brighton bomb and a few of theirs were victims, they

are now trying to use it to the full for their own reactionary purposes...

-Pinelli

But the thing that I saw in your face

No power can disinherit:
No bomb that ever burst
Shatters the crystal spirit.

-George Orwell, 'Homage to Catalonia'

NOTE. For a detailed account of the 'Strategy of Tension' in English see Stuart Christie's 'Stefano delle Chiaie: Portrait of a "Black" Terrorist', Anarchy Magazine/Refract Publications, 1984.

ROBOTS

The first robots which will be capable of identifying, attacking and killing humans are currently being developed by Robot Defence Systems, Thornton, Colorado USA. The first of the three laws of robotics which were laid down by the scientist and SF author Isaac Asimov and which stated that 'robots may never harm or kill humans' is already being ignored, even though the robot industry is still in its infancy.

PROWLER, the Programmable Robot Observer With Logical Enemy Response, computer controlled, moving around on six wheels and is armed with two machine guns and a grenade-thrower will soon be coming off the assembly line.

The exact details of the weaponry and whether the machine should open fire on its own initiative or be subject to human control is a decision which will be left to the customer. According to Walter Lee RDS's Marketing Co-ordinator, PROWLER will not be fitted with deadly weapons for the US market, and if so there will always be a human in the background who actually presses the button, but he admits there will be countries where the same political and moral (!) standards do not apply.

Christy Peake, the President of RDS, who in June this year presented the first prototype of the killer, describes it as an ideal way to protect air bases, pipe lines and palaces. In an interview with Newsweek he has said that an unnamed Middle Eastern royal family has ordered a 4 million consignment. At 200,000 dollars each, that sounds like a complete Palace guard. Iran and Iraq are also reported to have shown interest. Perhaps RDS would have us believe that all this is progress, that instead of sending children and soldiers to war we will send machines to go and fight each other, but the truth will no doubt be different: robots patrolling borders between countries, between rich suburbs and ghettos, between palace and cottage. Killers without hearts or scruple the logical conclusion of all weapons systems.

SOURCE: Ekomedia



AIMS AND PRINCIPLES OF THE DIRECT ACTION MOVEMENT

(1) The Direct Action Movement is a working class organisation.

(2) Our aim is the creation of a free and classless society.

(3) We are fighting to abolish the state, capitalism and wage slavery in all their forms and replace them by self-managed production for need not profit.

(4) In order to bring about the new social order, the workers must take over the means of production and distribution. We are the sworn enemies of those who would take over on behalf of the workers.

(5) We believe that the only way for the working class to achieve this is for independent organisation in the workplace and community and federation with others in the same industry and locality, independent of, and opposed to all political parties and trade union bureaucracies. All such workers organisations must be controlled by workers themselves and must unite rather than divide the workers movement. Any and all delegates of such workers organisations must be subject to immediate recall by the workers.

(6) We are opposed to all States and State institutions. The working class has no country. The class struggle is worldwide and recognises no artificial boundaries. The armies and police of all States do not exist to protect the workers of those States, they exist only as the repressive arm of the ruling class.

(7) We oppose racism, sexism, militarism and all attitudes and institutions that stand in the way of equality and the right of all people everywhere to control their own lives and the environment.

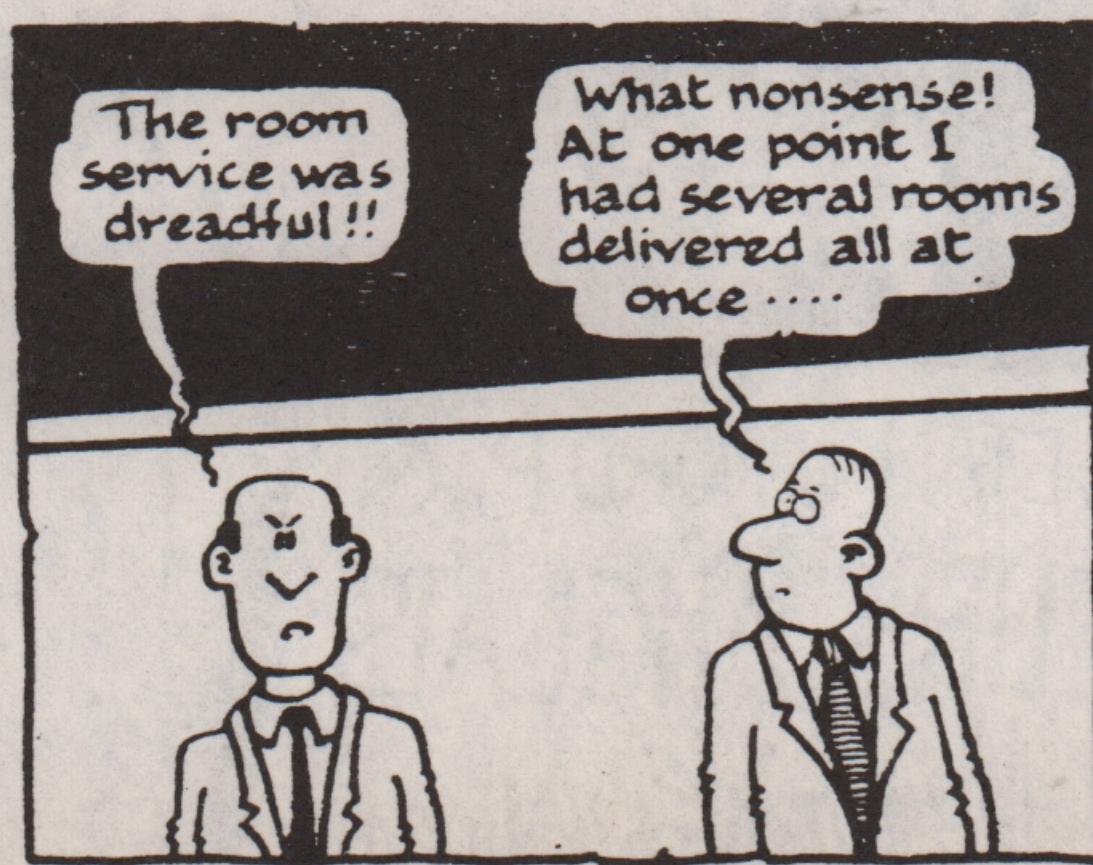
(8) The Direct Action Movement is a federation of groups and individuals who believe in the principles of anarcho-syndicalism; a system where the workers alone control industry and the community without the dictates of politicians, bureaucrats, bosses and so-called experts.

I would like to know more about the DAM/IWA. Please send more information. I enclose a stamped addressed envelope.
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ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM IN GERMANY- FAU

In Germany, the anarcho-syndicalist movement took the form of an organisation called the 'Freie Arbeiter Union' (Free Workers' Union). The FAU was founded in 1919; its ideological roots, however, go back to the early days of the first workers' and trades union movements in Germany. As the workers organised themselves into associations and unions, two fundamentally differing views emerged as to the organisation and function of these unions.

Ferdinand Lassalle and other Marxist union leaders advocated a form of bureaucratic centralised control, and Lassalle himself developed a dictatorial attitude in relation to the rank and file. There was, on the other hand, a group of dissidents known as 'Localists' who sought federally-structured unions with delegates subject to instant recall and no paid officials. They attacked the leadership for towing the party line...in this case the line of the Social Democratic Party of Germany; (still marxist at this time) The Localists' protests were formulated by Carl Hillmann:

"The union is the means towards the emancipation of the working class. The mass of the workers distrusts all political parties, by whom they have been deceived. The economic, political and intellectual liberation of the workers is to be brought about through evolution and education."

When the German Social-democratic party abandoned its revolutionary aims in 1891, an opposition group, 'Die Jungen' protested that the revolution was being sacrificed on the altar of parliamentary power and left the party, aligning themselves to small anarchist orientated groups. In 1897, the Localists organised themselves into the 'Free Association of German Trades Unions', breaking all links with political parties in 1907-8. At its twelfth congress, this association became the FAU, and an independent anarcho-syndicalist theory and practice emerged. Activists did not preach the new social order; they were realistic enough to see that the political environment was too dangerous and too unpredictable for this to be possible...Nevertheless it was deemed necessary to struggle by all possible means against the sham of parliamentary democracy and capitalist exploitation, whilst attempting to chip away at the servile mentality of an embittered and disillusioned population. Bourgeois society was not to be replaced with proletarian dictatorship, so the FAU set itself the task of

spreading "Conviction and imagination" amongst the masses to prevent the emergence of a new ruling class via the Communist Party vanguard. For this purpose, direct action was valued as educational as well as emancipatory, ensuring that theory evolved from practice and not vice-versa.

After the revolutionary activity which immediately followed the end of the first World War ended in bloody repression, the FAU generally concentrated on day to day political activity, but did not give up its revolutionary perspective. A constant theme of the FAU was its determined opposition to the attempts to reconcile workers with bosses by "allowing" workers' representatives to sit alongside managerial staff on factory committees. In preference to this, the FAU sought workers self-management and a co-operative system of production, with delegates to co-ordinate decision-making without having power to make decisions themselves: this would be the sole right of the rank and file. But the development of anarch-syndicalism was not without its critics from within the wider anarchist movement. During the revolutionary activity of 1918, almost all anarchists helped in setting up workers' and soldiers' councils. But following the victory of parliamentary democracy, differences arose between those

who favoured the concentration of activity on disrupting the system by means of small, clandestine groups of cells, and those who affirmed the importance of the class struggle nature of revolutionary activity.

Although at times the membership of the FAU exceeded 120,000, the Nazi dictatorship and the prohibition of the organisation by both the West and the Soviet Union after WW2 effectively destroyed it as a mass movement. During the Nazi regime, influential figures such as Rodolf Rocker and Augustin Souchy were forced to flee the country, and many took part in the Spanish struggle and other international conflicts. Leaflets and pamphlets were still being produced secretly and escape-lines were set up and factories sabotaged until 1940, by which time most anarchists were either dead or in exile, or else in concentration camps. Among those who died at the hands of the Nazis was Erich Mühsam, and activists of the present day FAU-IWA planned events this year both in tribute to Mühsam and as part of a movement to revive his political writings. The modern day FAU-IWA is a smaller affair, but has members in most large cities in the Federal Republic. It sees its main task as providing a focus for groups and individuals to direct their efforts along constructive lines. "It is essential that the different activities be

directed within a single framework towards a common goal and that...a permanent structure exists on call in case of emergencies".

Although involved in a wide variety of issues (anti fascism, anti-racism and anti-militarism) the FAU has been particularly successful in its trade union activity, playing a large part in the recent strike for a 35 hour week (it goes without saying that the leadership sold out). Working on "solidarity committees", the FAU finds itself alongside Communists and Trotskyists as well as non committed workers. There has also been a bit of trouble with Trot infiltrators. Some other Trots also call themselves FAU, so the anarcho-syndicalists now refer to themselves as FAU-IAA (IWA).

+FAU policy document.

LEEDS ARREST

On 13th of October an Anarchist was arrested in Leeds for selling an Anarchist paper.

He was held at Milgarth Police Station all day and has been charged.

The charge sheet reads: that "on 13th October in Lands Lane, Leeds you displayed insulting writing sign or visible representation whereby a breach of the peace was likely to be occasioned."

Don't let the police suppress free speech. We demand, defend free speech in Lands Lane!

LETTER- IT'S THE SAME THE WORLD OVER

A correspondent in the Libertarian Workers Group (New York) writes: "Thanks very much for all the stuff you sent us back in July. We've been covering the UK coal strike very closely. In fact we did a joint benefit for the striking UK miners and Phelps Dodge strikers. The Phelps Dodge strikers, if you're unfamiliar with the struggle, are mainly Mexican-American and native American copper miners and smelters in the rural region of Arizona. These workers' unions (13 in all, mainly divided along craft lines) failed to really back then up (what else is new) against the onslaught of the State National Guard and Sheriffs Department. The struggle has been going on for a year now, and has often times been bloody with lots of police riots and workers resistance. There has been little substantial solidarity by organised labour and little coverage and support by the 'Left'."

"Although we don't get a lot of detailed reports on workers happenings your way we do get enough. Although

traditions and conditions are different in the UK, the recent struggles there have been somewhat the same here. The Warrington printers strike was, for example, similar to our Greyhound strike. The trade unions' response has been the same as the TUC affiliates to the crisis and any sort of organised fight back. Not that we expect the trade union lieutenants responses to be much more than they are. Yet the parallels are remarkably similar."

"Yesterday was our Labour Day. Labour Day here in the USA is a poor counter-part to your May Day. May Day here by the way, is called 'Law and Order Day' but there's no celebrations or the like. Labour Day is usually festive and not very militant, though it is a show of Labour's strength. For example, almost 500,000 people marched in the New York City parade. The parade is festive but boring with all the Democratic Party hacks showing up, including Walter Mondale. In fact, this year the trade union bureaucrats put on a

big show for Mondale with lots of signs and calls for voting for the Democratic Party. The AFL-CIO (ie the American TUC) and affiliated unions answer to the crisis (for them the crisis is Reagan and Reagan only) is a massive vote for Mondale, plain and simple."

"The election will somewhat be a litmus test for affiliated AFL-CIO unions. If Mondale loses (which seems rather likely) then the trade unions will be split as to what road to take. If Reagan wins, the working class as a whole (only about 20% belong to any union) will be under the gun. Bargaining will be tough and Reagan is planning some pretty mean labour law legislation. The rank and file is split and its hard to see which way workers will swing. So the road will be tough and we, as anarcho-syndicalists, have a long and tough road to go. In some ways, our only hope will be to pick up on the endless disillusionment many workers have with the trade union bureaucracy and the political alternatives offered to them."

DIRECT ACTION

NO. 20 NOVEMBER 1984 20p

IRELAND

Britain's Vietnam

The history of Ireland is the history of oppression. British Colonialism in one form or another has been there since the days of the Angevin conquest and continues to perpetrate and re-perpetrate daily, fresh horrors against the Irish population. Of course this is common knowledge at least among the more politically conscious elements of the British public. Unfortunately what is well known often can be, and is, taken for granted, swept away under the carpet, ignored, or at least gives rise to complacent tut-tuts wherever Ireland or the Irish situation is mentioned.

I have just returned recently from a visit to Belfast as a member of the "Troops Out" movement delegation. I came back visibly shaken from my first experience of brutal oppression and naked colonialism. I have been a class struggle Anarchist (Anarcho-Syndicalist) now for fifteen years. (The same number of years since the recent British occupation of Ulster.) During that time the media has consistently played down the full horrors of the British Governments occupation. Constantly reiterating that British troops are there purely as a peace keeping force serving the interests of the Irish people as a whole, to keep them from cutting each others throats.

HIROSHIMA

The reality is somewhat different, Belfast at first sight (at least in areas occupied by the British) bears much resemblance to pictures I have seen of Nagasaki and Hiroshima after the bombs of 1946. Ruined buildings, burnt out cars, and the ever present road blocks and troops hurtling by, gives the ordinary visitor a brief glimpse of the tragedy that is a daily reality for the Irish population of Belfast.

Most Anarchists who are involved in revolutionary struggle against the State are aware of the early morning police call (re 121 Bookstore and the Brixton squats), but for the Republican population of Belfast

and Derry this is a commonplace. The brutal house-searches, the whisking away of political activists to the military detention barracks for what is euphemistically called "interrogation" (read torture). All this is part and parcel of the daily life of Republican Belfast.



I was privileged to stay in the homes and visit the clubs of Republican activists during my all too short four day visit. What impressed me as an Anarchist and a revolutionary was the openness, the warm-hearted hospitality, the lack of racism towards me (despite my rather unusual delight in wearing jewelry and displaying innumerable badges) towards one who is, after all, a member (however reluctant) of the oppressing culture. I kept repeating to myself after the cold-blooded murder of Sean Downes (to which I was a witness) and the incredibly violent behaviour of the British troops and the R.U.C.: "they will never conquer this people". If ever I saw a politically conscious, tremendously brave working class population it was there on the streets of Belfast. Despite the desperate poverty, the unemployment, the degrading brutality of the oppression, the Belfast Republican working class is not only ready and willing to listen to alternative political ideas, they do so with an open eagerness and a sense of immediate urgency.

The Republican movement that I spent my time with bore little resemblance to the stories of bigoted Catholic nationalism to which I had been led to expect, from both others accounts, and the media. I found a people intensely alive and open to new ideas, aware of the social problems and intent on solving them as soon as the oppressive British presence is



Michael Reilly, of New Lodge, Belfast, was shot in the face by a plastic bullet on 12th August. It fractured his jaw and he was in intensive care at the hospital for two days. One month later and his jaw, mouth and teeth are still wired up and he has difficulty in talking.

withdrawn. They expressed interestingly diverse opinions to me about racism, gay rights, sexism and socialist alternatives. I met activists who spoke with the Anarchist vision of society as I did. I spoke to Republican organisers who espoused decentralism, federalism and community and workers control (in the Anarchist sense). I remember talking to one rank and file activist who claimed he was neither a Republican nor a Nationalist but a reactionary. (Amid the laughter of himself and his wife.) He went on to explain to my shocked and horrified face that he meant that he was only reacting against British oppression by meeting violence with violence. In this sense he was a reactionary.

The Republican movement is indeed diverse, I will not try to disguise the fact that I had very real differences of opinion with certain members of the "Sein Fein" organisation who espoused beliefs, for example, about "revolutionary" Cuba and who saw socialism in statist and nationalist terms, and I made quite clear that I saw loyalty to class as more important than national differences. The rank and file, however, were much more open and ready to express ideas more in keeping with my own Anarcho-Syndicalism.

LOYALIST

The one disappointment that I felt keenly during the whole of my visit was that I was unable to communicate with, or even meet on any level, the ordinary Loyalist working class people. Mainly this was due to the fact that my own life would have been endangered if I had gone anywhere near the Loyalist areas. Loyalist para-military groups exist to prevent the two sides from holding any meaningful dialogue. If only the barricades could be brought down and communication exist between the 2 groups, I am persuaded British built divisions would disappear. Not overnight, of course, but a step would have been taken along the

road to working class unity. The physical barricades themselves serve as a pitiful and terrible reminder of the continuing success of Britain's divide and rule policy, keeping both oppressed groups apart on a political and economic level. Anarchists must become aware of the terrible reality of British oppression and struggle against it wherever possible by demanding on every possible occasion an end to the British military and political presence in Ulster. They should tell their friends that British troops in Ireland are there as a prop to the present sectarian divisions and left alone the Irish working class would be well on the way to finding their own solutions.

Disney

Is Ian MacGregor any relation to the duck tycoon Uncle Scrooge? Is Mickey Mouse a scab, is Pluto a running dog? These and many more questions will be answered by pickets at Disneyland. Disneyland lost gate-takings to the Los Angeles Olympics this year, hence a wage increase demand has been refused by the bosses and picketing started up!

Nikitin



We are sad to report the death of the Ukrainian free trade unionist Alexi Nikitin (mentioned in DA no.18).

In late February or early March he died of stomach cancer in the Donetsk Ordinary Psychiatric Hospital No.2, where he had been interned since 1980.

Source: VOLYA.